

PROVO CANYON, UTAH COUNTY

The early settlers of *Provo Canyon* included William Ferguson, Enos Carter, Pony Steel, Hyrum Heiselt, Charles Conrad, W. B. Slick, George Duke, Reese Hooks and others. Dr. Pike owned the land which is now Canyon Glenn and had a home there, where he spent much of his spare time. Charles Conrad and Charles Giles both had ranches in South Fork and their families still own and operate them. George Duke and Reese Hooks also had ranches in South Fork but this property is now owned by Provo City.

Mr. W. B. Slick owned the property which is now Vivian Park. He had cattle and sheep and used the land for grazing purposes. Samuel Carter was caretaker for several years. Later it was sold to John Carter and he, and his son-in-law turned it into Vivian Park, a canyon resort. It is now operated by Keith Barrow.

The Jesse Knight family secured Canyon Glenn and the Springdell property. Provo City now owns Canyon Glenn and it is now a city park.

Along in the nineties L. L. Donnon came to Provo Canyon from Chicago for his health. He was suffering from tuberculosis and had been advised to live in a canyon in the west. He secured the land which is now Upper Falls resort. Mr. Donnon recovered and



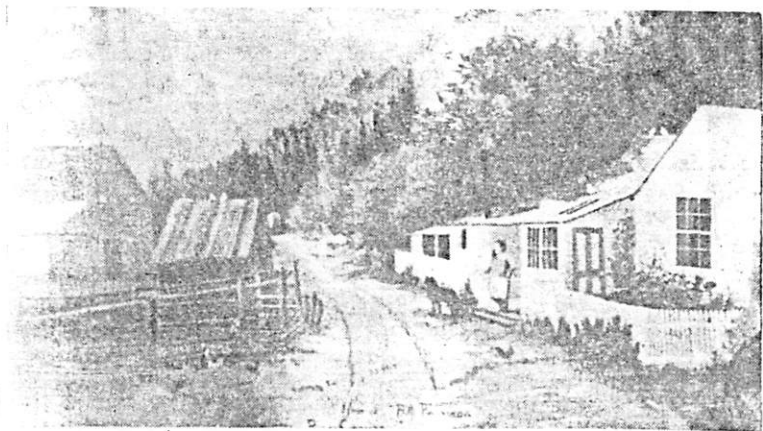
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he and his wife saw an opportunity for opening a canyon retreat. They purchased tents, rented them, and then began adding different attractions to the place until they had a flourishing business. About ten years ago Mr. Donnon retired and the resort was sold to Provo City. It is now a public park and play ground.

Enos Carter secured a large tract of land about a mile up Provo Canyon. He built a rock house on the place and lived there about fifteen years before he sold the property to Hyrum Heiselt who furnished the house, improved the grounds, and kept summer boarders, including men working in the canyon. He also had a small store and a saloon. Pony Steel owned a large place joining the Heiselt property. Upon this property were seven large springs which furnished water for irrigation for his large garden. He also owned fine cattle. After the death of Mr. Steel this property, together with the Heiselt property, was sold to Orem City and these springs are the source of water used by the people of Orem.

Probably one of the most notable figures in Provo Canyon was William "Billy" Ferguson. The following is taken from history written by Mr. Ferguson's wife, in which she says, "they were married in 1863. They later moved to the canyon and located just below Spring Dell where her husband operated a toll gate for the county. Later they moved up the canyon about half a mile below Vivian Park and had charge of the toll gate there."—*Lucy I. Clyde*

Billy Ferguson. Midway between Provo and Heber Valley stood a famous roadhouse owned and operated by a good natured Scotsman named Billy Ferguson. Surrounding it was a beautiful camping place, restful and shady, with plenty of good fishing in the Provo



Artist drawing of home and barnyard of "Billy" Ferguson, historic figure of Provo Canyon

River. The establishment offered splendid accommodations and Mr. Ferguson made everyone welcome. His lunch counter, soft drinks, candies, etc., offered a treat for the weary travelers as the road through the canyon was long and rough. He especially loved flowers, both cultivated and wild varieties and his place was surrounded with them as well as the many lovely potted plants which adorned the windows. The fruit-bearing trees he planted were enjoyed by many who came that way.

Billy Ferguson was a born optimist and derived happiness from each day as it came along for he loved his home in this mountain solitude. His scrapbooks, paintings and pictures were a joy to see and many visitors lingered as long as possible under his hospitable roof. He was especially happy when he took part in the Bobby Burn's birthday party which was held on the 25th of January of each year. He joined in all the merriment, dancing the "Highland Fling" to the delight of all the Scots who came from far and near to join in these entertainments.

One wintry night a huge snowslide completely covered this kindly man, his pets, possessions, and beautiful surroundings, as if the Almighty had "tucked him in" for his last long sleep.

—*Josie M. Todd*

A TRIP TO THE RANCH THROUGH PROVO CANYON

My father, Oscar Brigham Young, homesteaded 160 acres of land in Weber Canyon, about sixty miles northeast of Provo. Early in the spring he would go by team and lumber wagon up *Provo Canyon* through Heber, Kamas, Oakley and sometimes Peoa, then up a canyon east of Oakley to the ranch. He then planted grain, helped fix roads, and very often repaired the bridges over the Smith-Moorhouse Fork of the Weber River.

As soon as school was out, Father returned and the family made preparations to move to Weber for the summer. There were eight children ranging in age from two to eighteen years. Mother drove a team hitched to the "White Top" with three or four seats filled with children. Father drove a team hitched to the lumber wagon, with chickens in a box fastened to the side of the wagon. At times a cow was tied behind the wagon and this meant we had to travel very slowly, no faster than the cow could walk.

When we arrived at the mouth of Provo Canyon, which was about six miles from home, we encountered the first dugway. Two of the children would get out of the buggy and one would walk half-way down the dugway while the other proceeded to the end of the dugway where there was room for wagons to pass each other if one happened to be coming from the opposite direction. Then one child signalled to the other child, who, in turn, signalled Father and if the way was clear the wagon proceeded on its way. Sometimes another wagon

would be coming down the canyon but most of the time they were willing to wait until Father's wagon came along. At each dugway this procedure would be repeated until we had passed. The road was narrow with mountains straight up and down on one side and the river on the other side. There were thirteen dugways in all through the canyon.

We were all day getting to Heber where we stayed overnight. Sometimes we stayed with friends but many times we pitched our tents and slept in them or slept out under the stars. The next morning we went through Kamas, Oakley, Peoa and up another canyon which was wider, so there were no bad dugways but we had to ford the river very often as the bridges were generally washed out. As we went through the water we hoped we would not hit a hidden boulder that would tip the wagon over, or cause the horses to stumble and fall. Father, and some of the men who lived in that vicinity, would wade into the river and clear a narrow trail for the wagon wheels if we had difficulty in crossing.

Our three-room log cabin was very comfortable for those days. There were wild raspberries to be picked and Mother would put them in the emptied bottles which we had brought with us full of fruit. We also had a garden with all kinds of vegetables. Father and the boys caught fish and wild sage hens. We were just seven miles from Holiday Park where quite a number of well-to-do families from Salt Lake City spent part of the summer.

We had an organ to entertain ourselves and Mother always took the sewing machine with her, so that we could make our clothes for the coming winter of school.

About September first, it was time to pack up and make the trip down the canyon. The same procedure was gone through. We generally stopped at the Smith farm for watermelons. Sometimes Father would take a chance of not meeting another wagon. How well I remember such an occasion when around the bend we went, and as we were near the last turn, there came a woman in a buckboard, and no room to pass. Father got out to see what could be done. He saw that he could unhook her team and lift the buckboard out of the way. He offered to do this. If looks and words could kill, Father would have dropped dead then and there. As it was Father got angry too, and his vocabulary in answering the woman was quite unusual. Nevertheless, Father proceeded to get the buckboard out of the road and we went on our way. We finally arrived home a tired but happy group, ready for another year of school.

—*Beatrice Young Moore*

HOBBLE CREEK

The following was taken from Oliver Boardman Huntington's diary: